

SUPRING NIGHTS at the PLAY



IVY TROUTMAN
IN "TAKING CHANCES"
BY LAWRENCE REAMER.

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THE changes through which the works of the French farce writers must go before they are put before the American public are various. Yet there seemed novelty in the manner of treating "Ma Tante de Honfleur" which Edward Wayburn produced on Monday night at the Gaiety Theatre. There was nothing especially new in the idea of transferring the scenes to this city and Lakewood. But it was unusual to have so much of the story removed that the remainder is all but incomprehensible.

Mr. Wayburn kept his players moving at just as brisk a tempo as if they had been in musical farce, and they had all been trained to swift and noise as if they were a part of the chorus. Every actor spoke at the top of his lungs and moved at full speed from one side of the stage to the other. This is of course the approved American method of playing farce, although these plays in the state in which they are given to the world are often acted with great subtlety. But they are subtle in their original form, so it is perhaps not worth while to attempt to treat them in this way when the American version is so much of a departure from the original. But there is the part of some theatregoers a greater enjoyment of the quiet subtlety of a well acted farce than of a noisy extravaganza.

"She's In Again" was greeted by a most loyal public. Mr. Wayburn must have the most devoted friends. We have known friends who applauded and even bought tickets. Then we have known friends who would applaud enthusiastically. But Mr. Wayburn has still more devoted friends. They even laugh for him, which is under certain conditions a great test of friendship.

The opening of the summer season in the theatres comes with less novelty than usual. The customarily frivolous shows have to carry out just the sort of entertainment which has proved most in demand during the regular season. As previous periods of war have shown, there is ever so much demand for the most frivolous kind of theatricals as during these troubled periods. And there has naturally been an ample supply. Even George Cohan turned from the drama to which he had been dedicating his services for several years and gave the world "Hello Broadway," only an entertainment of this kind has the public interest itself deeply enough to come often. Think of the success of "Chin Chin," which attracted crowds of houses still continues to be the most successful play in the city. The taste of the public has indeed been in the direction of music and fun. It is likely to be in that direction most of the time, but it is especially true of the present season.

So the summer plays will have to strike a higher average of humor than ever if they are going to please a public which has been laughing, or "giggling" all during the winter at just the same sort of humor. The imagination of the men who write the words of these plays, as well as the men who compose the music, seems to be amply supplied with inspiration which is guaranteed not to run out. The devices of the "producers" of these musical pieces seem equally inexhaustible. They may appear to a fastidious taste a little bit more lacking in year after year in discrimination as to means and means of creating a hit. More vulgar and less restrained they certainly are every season, but they have always served their purpose in the past and they doubtless will be equal to the task this summer, even when more is expected of them.

How devastating it is merely to bring a new play to the variety stage to these theatregoers and regard them as an

assurance of success more than one experience has proved. It takes skillful blending of talents to throw their scenes into effective relief, and often what they have been doing in the music halls for years is altogether lacking in fun when it is put on the stage of a regular playhouse and expected to have its wonted effect. The manufacture of a successful review would be much less complicated were it possible to insure prosperity merely by assembling well known players from the variety stages.

Some of the playwrights who came to the surface during the past season may be expected to contribute some novelties to the stage during the winter. Roy McGee, who has two notably successful plays to his credit, will have a new war play, and Edward Peple, who made his most fortunate essay in "A Pair of Sixes" will have a new farce for the public some time during the coming year. A. H. Woods has two plays by unknown authors in "Common Clay," by Charles Kinkaid, and "The New Shylock." Mr. Kinkaid is a Harvard playwright. The other is the first play of Herman Schaffner.

Edward Sheldon will have two new plays ready and there are two dramas from the pen of Charles Klein. A melodrama and a farce by Paul M. Potter have been accepted for production. Then A. E. Thomas will have a new drama from the French as well as two original plays. The Hattons of Chicago are to see one of their plays, "The Song Bird," acted here in the early theatre season; so there will be enough dramas of local origin to do something toward meeting the demand.

NOVELTIES OF THE WEEK.

Gilbert and Sullivan Revival—New Winter Garden Show.

Theatrical managers appear to have taken a new lease of life, to judge by the busy week in store at this time of the season. W. A. Brady will make his third revival at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre to-morrow evening when he will present De Wolf Hopper and "Trial by Jury." The Shuberts come forward at the Winter Garden with the second show of the season, "The Passing Review of 1915." The Washington Square Players and their engagements with a new programme at the Bandbox Theatre, and Granville Barker's Greek productions on the College of the City of New York with a performance in the open of "The Trojan Women," by Euripides.

The Gilbert and Sullivan revival at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre to-morrow night will be notable as serving to reintroduce Dugby Bell, who originated in this country the role of Dr. Daly, in "The Sorcerer." His reunion with Mr. Hopper at this time will take many theatregoers back in memory to the days when both were prominent in the McCall Opera Company at Wallack's, the Bijou and the Casino Theatres.

"Trial by Jury" and "The Sorcerer" have but seldom been seen in America for the same reason that "The Yeoman of the Guard" remained so long in retirement, since they require a broader versatility on the part of the leading player than the other Gilbert and Sullivan works. In the cast for "Trial by Jury" will be Mr. Hopper as the Judge, Arthur Aldridge, John Winger, William Danforth, Herbert Waters, Gladys Caldwell and Alice McComb. In "The Sorcerer" Mr. Hopper will enact the role of John Wellington Wells and Mr. Bell will play Dr. Daly. Natalie Ait will be Alice.

On Thursday evening the Winter Garden will make its annual summer

production, which is to be known as "The Passing Show of 1915." To-night the theatre will be given over to the usual Sunday concert and until the opening Thursday the house will remain dark. The cast will include John Charles Thomas, Boyce and Brax, George Monroe, John T. Murray, Eugene and Willie Howard, Harry Fisher, Theodore Kosloff, Ernest Hare, Sam Hoar, Arthur Hill, Alexis Kosloff, Rodion Mendeleff, Frances Demarest, Marilyn Miller, Daphne Pollard, Mme. Baldina, Frances Pritchard, Juliette Lippe, Helen Eley, June Elvidge, Eleanor Pendleton, Morin Sisters, Eleanor Brown, Olga Hempton, Rosie Quinn and others. Like its predecessors the present "Passing Show" will be divided into two acts and twelve scenes. Among these is a scenic novelty. The entertainment will also embrace travesties on the most successful plays of the present season, such as "Experience," "The Song of Songs," "The Law of the Land," "Twin Beds," "The Peasant Girl," "Taking Chances," "The White Feather," "Triby," "Androcles and the Lion," "Kick In," "Daddy Long-Legs," "Polygamy," "Under Cover" and others.

The Washington Square Players will give one more bill before closing their season at the Bandbox Theatre. The novelty will be the one act farce, "A Bear," by Anton Tchekhov, the Russian playwright. The other plays will be favorites chosen from previous bills of the Players. They are Maeterlinck's "Interior," Edward Goodman's "Eugenically Speaking" and Holland Hudson's pantomime in black and white, "The Shepherd in the Distance." This bill will be given for the first time to-morrow evening. It will be repeated on Tuesday evening, May 25, and will bring the season to a close with two performances, matinee and evening, on Monday, May 31. The present bill, consisting of "A Miracle of Saint Anthony," "Saviors," "In April" and "Forbidden Fruit" will be given Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings of this week.

The feature of the dedication of the stadium at the City College next Saturday will be the first performance in New York of Lillah McCarthy and Granville Barker's Greek productions on the open day Euripides' "Trojan Women" will be presented, with a cast that includes Miss McCarthy, Edith Wynne Mathison, Chrystal Herne, Gladys Hanson, Ian MacLaren, Lionel Braham and others. It will be repeated publicly on the afternoon of Wednesday, June 2. "Iphigenia in

the Tauris" will be given on Monday, May 31, and Saturday, June 5.

The "Trojan Women" and the "Iphigenia in Tauris" were the tenth and eleventh plays that Euripides, most versatile of Greek dramatists, wrote. We have no less than nineteen dramas

of his preserved for us through twenty-three centuries, nineteen out of the ninety-two that tradition says he composed. Of the works of Sophocles and Aeschylus we have but seven each. No worthy successors to this brief line and their forgotten rivals that filled the fifth century B. C. with their splendor has ever arisen.

Euripides was the radical and innovator of his time. The aim of the Greek drama, representing a remote historic age, the principal characters always gods or the offspring of gods, was to show the vain struggle of man against his fate. Sophocles rarely has the gods on the stage, for with him man works out his own doom, for Sophocles, with all his greatness, aimed to please his ruler, Pericles, who with the enlightened circle with which he had surrounded himself probably troubled himself little, beyond judicious outward conformity, with traditional mythology. So Sophocles' cold conformity to Aeschylus' theology was a mere artistic utterance.

But Euripides had not so harmonious or happy a nature. The pathos of human life, the capriciousness of Destiny, the seemingly unjust distribution of lots distressed and perplexed him. He had written only one play, "Alceste," prior to his fiftieth year, and at that time there began the great national tragedy, the thirty years war, destined to end in the humiliation and downfall of Imperial Athens.

The plague and the death of Pericles made the beginnings of the great strife seem overwhelmingly tragic and the appalling disaster in Sicily foreshadowed the end, indeed made it inevitable long before it came. It is not strange that Euripides often doubted the divine wisdom and felt a strife which his art could not reconcile between man and Providence. And so it is that though the gods take a prominent part in his plays they usually act with less noble motives than the human characters.

There are even some who say that Euripides made it his lifelong purpose to undermine the belief in Zeus and Apollo, Pallas Athene and their kin. He has been called an aggressive agnostic, using the forms of the traditional gods to show their helplessness, their impossibility, their inability.

But even more truly than his great rivals did he know men and women thoroughly, loved them, found them heroic, generous, noble, and so painted them. The gods, whom he did not know, fared worse. He was

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yet the very reverse was true. The next war was to be baser and crueler than the old wars just as it was vaster in extent.

A drama showing the most terrible of all the effects of war, the suffering of women and children, "The Trojan Women" is said to be one of the greatest arguments for peace ever conceived. The exclamation of Poseidon over the fate of Troy might have been written yesterday, with this:

How are ye blind, ye traders down of cities, ye that cast temples of devotion and lay waste tombs, the untrodden sanctuaries where the ancient dead, yourselves so soon to be

The "Iphigenia in Tauris" is one of the very few Greek plays ever written which end happily for all concerned. The same Oracles who in an earlier play, "Electra," was destined to unhappy wanderings in punishment for having slain his mother is here brought to the end of his goings up and down the earth and reunited to his long lost sister Iphigenia, sails for his home in Argos, away from the "Friendless Land," where it is the custom to slay all strangers.

Never before have Greek plays been given in America with anything like the attention to detail and to large artistic effects that Mr. Barker has lavished upon these. Through long weeks the choruses have been rehearsing the peculiarly difficult measures of their songs and the evolutions that accompany them. The principals include Lillah McCarthy, Edith Wynne Mathison, Chrystal Herne, Gladys Hanson, Lionel Braham, Ian MacLaren, Leonard Willey, Phillip Merivale and others of almost equal prominence.

Four special cars are required for the transportation of the stage setting of background designed by Norman Wilkinson, who has also designed the costumes. These in themselves are worth a separate story.

AMUSEMENT RESORTS.

Coney Island's Activities Getting Into Full Swing.

With the warm weather come the opening of various outdoor amusement resorts in the vicinity of New York. Coney Island, Brighton Beach, Luna Park and similar places, where music hall entertainments are in vogue. This summer promises a gala year for all such enterprises.

Douglas Fairbanks, late of "The Show Shop," is making a vaudeville reappearance at the Brighton Theatre this week. He will present John

"The Birth of a Nation" at the Liberty Theatre, D. W. Griffith's gripping drama of the civil war and the reconstruction period in the South, the assassination of President Lincoln, the Ku Klux Klan and other features. "The Eternal City" continues to be popular at the Astor Theatre. The Famous Players Film Company's production of Hall Caine's novel of life in modern Rome, with Pauline Frederick in the leading role, will be supplanted on May 31 with "The Alien" based on the play "The Sign of the Cross." It will be acted by a strong and capable cast.

"Stolen Goods" is the title of the new picture at the Strand Theatre this week with Blanch Sweet in the leading role. The plot makes use of the problem of exchanged identities revolving about a Boston nurse and her friend. The Strand will also show some interesting foreign travel and educational pictures, the Strand topical review and a new musical and vocal programme.

At the Vignette Theatre this week the leading picture will be "A Price for Folly," which, with the third instalment of the feature serial "The Goddess," will be the particular attraction. Others include "Mr. and Mrs. Kinkaid," "The Treatment," and "Mr. Kinkaid of Bohemia," an amusing story of love by proxy that disrupts an alliance of art and is the means of a timid man winning a suffragette bride.

"The Plunderer" is the new picture in the week's programme at the New York Hippodrome. It is adapted from Roy Norton's novel of the same name, with William Farnum in the leading role. There will be a second instalment of the pictures of the Pendleton roundup shown under the name "The Cowboy is King." The musical features will introduce a new group of singers headed by Evelyn Barnes and Anthony Howard, who will render a musical divertissement introducing a number of new songs.

George C. Tilyou's Steeplechase Park at Coney Island opened yesterday. There are sixty-one attractions, which twenty-two are new ones. The park has been changed, remodelled and renovated at a cost of \$100,000. Extra bathing houses have been installed.

Luna Park opened its veteran public picture yesterday. The veteran public

NEW PLAYS OF THE WEEK.

MONDAY—Forty-eighth Street Theatre—De Wolf Hopper and the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company will revive "The Sorcerer" and "Trial by Jury," to be given as a double bill in the third offering of the season's engagement.

Bandbox Theatre—The Washington Square Players will conclude their engagement with the presentation of a new play, "A Bear," by Tchekhov, a one act farce. The other plays are Maeterlinck's "Interior" and "The Shepherd in the Distance," by Holland Hudson.

THURSDAY—Winter Garden—The Messrs. Shubert will present their annual summer show, "The Passing Review of 1915." The book and lyrics have been written by Harold Ateridge. The production is to be staged by J. C. Huffman and a prominent cast of vaudeville artists will take part.

SATURDAY—Granville Barker will present "The Trojan Women," a Greek play by Euripides, in the new stadium of the College of the City of New York. In the cast will be Lillah McCarthy, Edith Wynne Mathison, Chrystal Herne, Gladys Hanson, Ian MacLaren, Lionel Braham and others.

licity person who controls the destinies of this resort speaks as follows: "There are things to delight and thrill those who seek them with an abundance of sensation. For those desiring to be 'exclusive' there has been constructed a 'castellon' dancing pavilion, somewhat resembling a Swiss chalet, in which the exclusive set will be provided with a style of terpsichorean entertainment that has been approved in some of the famous resorts abroad. The entrance fee to this building has been fixed at a price to assure exclusiveness.

Among other new features may be mentioned the Midget City, with its epitome grand opera house, buildings, shops, houses and churches, and its Lilliputian inhabitants. There are about fifty of these little people and they do all manner of stunts with singing and dancing. Then there are swimming ducks, with a prize to any one successfully sinking one. A trip to Niagara, Miss Innocence Illusions, the Frisco Exhibition, the Bioplastic, the Edge of the World and others.

Two feature photographs, "The Man on the Case" and "The Baby," will be shown at the Broadway Theatre this week, the first by Grace Livingston Furness and the second by John Strange Winter.

As added attractions the Paramount South American Scenes, the Broadway Animated News and various comedy reels will be shown.

Madison Square Garden has been inaugurated with its summer season of motion pictures, symphony concerts and Arctic coolness, and is now the largest building in America devoted to the movies. Under the direction of the Arena Innovation Show Company big summer shows are to be given in the famous structure throughout the warm weather months twice every day, including Sunday. The building is cooled artificially and by real ice. Feature pictures will be shown every week and there will be a change of service bills every day. Attractions for this week feature "The Sporting Duchess," with Rose Coghlan, Ethel Clayton and a notable cast.

PLAYS ON THE SCREEN.

Attractions in the Motion Picture Houses This Week.

The leading motion picture plays which hold public attention this week are:

"The Birth of a Nation" at the Liberty Theatre, D. W. Griffith's gripping drama of the civil war and the reconstruction period in the South, the assassination of President Lincoln, the Ku Klux Klan and other features. "The Eternal City" continues to be popular at the Astor Theatre. The Famous Players Film Company's production of Hall Caine's novel of life in modern Rome, with Pauline Frederick in the leading role, will be supplanted on May 31 with "The Alien" based on the play "The Sign of the Cross." It will be acted by a strong and capable cast.

THE PRINCESS'S FUTURE.

It Will Be Made a Home of Mirth.

Ray Comstock has decided there shall be no more thrills and horrors at the Princess Theatre, only comedy and music, hereafter combined as they are in "Nobody Home."

"Regarding the Princess Theatre, I have definitely and absolutely decided that I am through with the one act dramas of shocks and thrills. I want no more such plays as 'The Black Mask' and 'The Kiss in the Dark.'"

"In the future the Princess Theatre will be synonymous with all that is light and joyous in the world of amusement. It is my hope to make it the home of the smartest kind of dainty musical comedy.

"It cost us over \$50,000 to try and educate the theatregoing public to appreciate the finer side of dramas of thrills and shocks," said P. Ray Comstock, founder and promoter of the Princess Theatre, last week. "And after it was all over we made the discovery, surprising as it may seem, that the public likes laughs better than highly sensational dramatic importations, of a dramatic nature. Even while these one act plays received the highest critical praise, and I have a collection of the most favorable newspaper notices and magazine appreciations, the fact remains that the public at large did not respond in sufficient numbers to pay the bills.

"Of course I could console myself with the reflection that after all, we scored artistic success during the past two years of shocks and thrills, but I do not believe there is such a thing as an artistic success and a financial failure. I believe that if a play is an artistic success it is also a financial success, since the public at large is the final judge in rating a play. I don't mind being called a commercial manager for taking this point of view."

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STARS TO AUCTION SEATS FOR LAMBS' GAMBOL

The public all star gambol of the Lambs to be given at the Century Theatre Friday evening, June 4, and Saturday afternoon and evening, June 5, for the benefit of the Actors' Fund of America promises to be the biggest and best theatrical entertainment ever presented on any stage. All of the stars of the stage and many of the most famous composers and dramatists will cooperate to present a programme such as has never before been attempted. Throughout the past season the actors have been called upon to help out innumerable charities and now they are going to try to help themselves and have entered heart and soul into the task of raising money to fill the great drain upon the land caused by an unusually trying year.

The public auction of boxes and seats for the opening performance will be held at the Hudson Theatre Thursday afternoon (May 27) at 3:30 and that promises to be an important event in itself. Among the many who will auction the first box, Dudley Field Malone, Collector of the Port, will use his well known persuasive powers to get a record price for the next box, and others among the celebrities who will take up the task of disposing of favored locations will be De Wolf Hopper, Nat Goodwin, Wilton Lackaye, Frank Tinney, Thomas A. Wise, Dave Montgomery, Clifton Crawford, Raymond Hitchcock and William Collier. This auction will be an all star performance itself and a display of favored locations will be given by the actors, actresses and women of the theatrical profession in making the occasion a notable one.

The remarkable programme of the all star gambol will include more than a dozen elaborate numbers, none of which have been seen or heard in public before. John L. Golden, who wrote "The Candy Shop," contributed two of these, "The River of Souls," a Chinese tragedy that will call for

strong emotional work on the part of several of the best known men on the English speaking stage, and "The Clock Shop," a dainty musical comedy in rhyme in which will appear Frank Moulan, Frank Deshon, Ernest Truex and other prominent artists. This is the first time that one man has contributed two numbers to any of the big gambols.

George V. Hobart has written an allegorical play entitled "Why" that bids fair to make an even more profound sensation than his "Experience," that was one of the big numbers of last year's gambol. "The Why" in this case is "Why Go to War?" and the play is as timely as brilliant.

Glen MacDonough has written an afterpiece entitled "The Hall of Fame" that will be played by twenty-five famous stars and leading men and women of the stage, and their crayers for weapons. Every one of them has a big army of admirers. They are Hy Mower, George McManus, C. A. Briggs, Gustav Kerk, John L. Golden, Harry T. E. Powers, Winsor McCay and R. L. Goldberg. Did you ever hear Victor Herbert play a selection from one of his famous operas on the piano? Ever hear Irving Berlin rattle off one of his wonderful original dance numbers? Well, Herbert and Berlin and Astor, Kerker, John L. Golden, Harry Hadley, Bert Green, Ray Goetz, Alfred Robyn, A. Baldwin Sonne and Ray Hubbell will appear together, every one at his piano, and first one and then another will play one of his best known melodies, which will be taken up by the other nine composers in variations. Never been done before. But then that will be the keynote of the whole entertainment, novelty and originality.

From music to the dance is a natural transition, and one of the biggest and most elaborate numbers on the programme will be "The History of Dancing," which will show the evolution of the art of Terpsichore from the plantation breakdown to the mod-

ern tango, in which William Collier, Jeff De Angeles, Frank Moulan, John Hays, Pat Rooney, Leon Errol, Charles Evans, Tom McNaughton, Hap Ward, Lawrence White, Frank Deshon and others of equal note will participate. There will be a quadruple quartet of the sweetest singers of the Lambs and other unusual numbers leading up to the grand finale, in which all of the famous actors and singers in town will participate.

So elaborate will be many of the numbers of this programme that such an entertainment would be impossible were it not for the big revolving stage of the Century Theatre that permits of one scene being set while another is being shown.

In addition to the prominent artists whose names have been mentioned above there will be such men in the entertainment as Joseph Weber, Frank Tinney, Edwin Stevens, Lewis Stone, William Morris, George McFarlane, Denman May, Frank Loring, Howard Estabrook, William Courtright, Ray S. Fennell, Leo Ditrinchstein, William Hodge, Andrew Mack, Frank McIntyre, John Staven, Henry Koker, Taylor Holmes, Arthur Byron, Frank McGinn, Fritz Williams, George Fawcett, William Courtright, Ray S. Fennell, Grant Mitchell, Julian Hodge, Douglas Park, Jackies, Robert Edison, Tracy Bell, William Farnum, William Elliot, Will Archer, Will Deming, Sam B. Hardy, Brandon Tynan, Ernest Glendinning, Charles King, John Sainpolis, George Probert, Morgan Coman, Eugene Nicander, Jack Hazzard, Eugene Cowles, George Lee, Moore, John Ward, Frank Hannah, Craig Campbell, John Park, George Hamlin, Frank Croxton, Robert Hossa, George O'Donnell, Harry McCluskey, Joseph Ratliff, John Hendricks, Richie Ling, Frank Belcher, Walter Lawrence, Harrison Brockbank and John McCloskey.